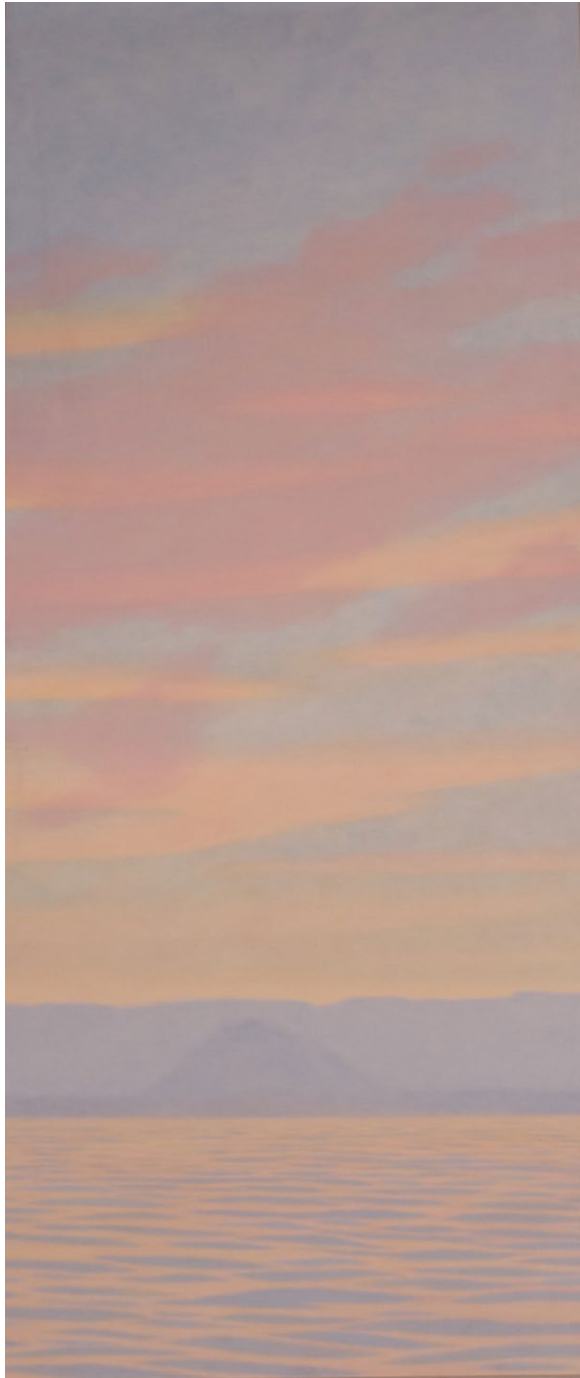


Stockbridge Church

bridging
the gap



The Bridge

Stockbridge
Parish Church
Newsletter

Saxe Coburg Street,
Edinburgh

www.stockbridgechurch.org.uk

Autumn 2025

MISSION STATEMENT

Being aware of the love of God in our lives, we, the congregation of Stockbridge Parish Church, as part of the world church seek to meet together in worship; to demonstrate faith in God in our everyday lives; to reach out to others, showing God's love and compassion; and to raise awareness of matters of justice locally and globally.

CONTACT US

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
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| Church Officer | Colin Clark, 07510 242018 churchofficer@stockbridgechurch.org.uk |

The church office core hours are Monday to Friday, 10-3 pm.



Letter from our Locum Minister, Rev John Munro

It was Peter Drucker, a management consultant, who suggested that “non-profit making institutions exist for the sake of their mission.” They exist to make a difference in society and in the life of the individual...and this must never be forgotten. If you lose sight of your mission, he warned, you begin to falter, and it shows very fast.” (Managing the Non -Profit Organisation.)

Given that the Christian Church is one such non-profit organisation and a congregation like Stockbridge has its part to play at a local level, how are we doing?

The last 25 years have seen more changes in the UK than at any other time in our history. Driven by science and technology, a revolution is taking place affecting lifestyle generally and the church’s mission in particular. Once mission was about coaxing people to come to church on a Sunday and, paradoxically, in this way fulfil the command to “go to all people everywhere” with the message of Christ and his Church. However, the settled community that we once were which would have allowed this to happen has changed almost beyond recognition.

The old familiar landmarks are still to be found dotted here and there but the way people organise their lives is very different. The increase in flexible working coupled with the need to earn more money to keep pace with inflation and house prices has meant that the working week has for many been extended. A substantial increase in car ownership and a change in regulations has made it more difficult if not impossible to find a parking space even for those who live in the area, never mind visitors. Changes to Sundays with the advent of Sunday trading, weekend leisure breaks, budget travel to far- away places, not to mention sporting events, means that there is little chance of going back to Sunday as ‘the day of rest’ for the majority.

Sunday services, once an important part of our life here in Scotland, are having to compete with what Dr Small the minister of St Cuthbert’s once called ‘unfair competition,’ with leisure activities of every kind winning the battle for hearts and minds. Given this trend is it reasonable for the parish church to continue as though nothing has changed when practically everything has changed?

As far as Sunday worship is concerned, which is and has been the most distinctive part of church life, this will surely continue for as long as people feel that it is meeting a real need. It is in and through worship that the church is equipped to share the 'hope that is in us' with those we meet and when and where. That said, it is likely that going forward we will require a two-pronged approach, for as long as 'birds of a feather flock together'- and they do - it is doubtful that what some Americans call "the one great hour of worship on a Sunday" will meet every worshipper's needs.

As we think together about the way forward for our church in Stockbridge at this uncertain time, it is vital that we all play our part. Increasing the size of the congregation would make a good start.

Rev John Munro

Congregational News

We celebrated with Olivia Conway and Paul Massey on the day of their wedding on 26th July.



The Future of our Church – have your say



(graphic courtesy of applemike.co.uk)

On Monday 11th August, we held a special meeting of the Kirk Session, setting aside the running of the Church to focus on where we are as a Church community and where we'd like to go.

One of the central themes was the appreciation of many parts of Stockbridge Parish Church life. We'd like to spread the net of this conversation wider and to hear from those of you beyond the Kirk Session. So over the next few weeks, we're hoping to record both the things you particular value about Stockbridge Parish Church (on Sundays and throughout the week) and some insights into your vision for what you'd like the Church to look like in the coming years - things we could do better, or simply differently. This will help to inform where we go next, what we seek to hold onto and what we might decide to leave behind.

There are three options to feed in

- (1) you can speak to any member of the Kirk Session or our locum minister John Munro over coffee after the Sunday Service;
- (2) you can drop a comment (or a number of comments!) in the comment box, which will be available from Sunday 17th August; or
- (3) you can email dpcoordinator@stockbridgechurch.org.uk (because our DP coordinator happened to volunteer, not because it's a data protection issue!)

Carolyn Thurston Smith

Come and be part of the journey. The Kirk Session look forward to hearing your thoughts and continuing to grow together in faith, fellowship, and purpose.

Ben Bond

Stockbridge & Comely Bank Churches Together: September Events

As part of our ongoing ecumenical links with neighbouring congregations, the Stockbridge & Comely Bank Churches Together invites you to two friendly and meaningful gatherings this September. These events offer a chance to connect with fellow Christians, enjoy time together, and share in our care for creation and community.

🌸 Garden Service at St Ninian's for Creationtide — Sunday 7th September, 6.00pm-

Join us for a relaxed early evening service in the front garden of St Ninian's Church (or indoors if the weather turns). This is a lovely opportunity to worship together in the open air, surrounded by flowers and friendship. All from Stockbridge are warmly welcome!

🌍 Climate Café in Action: Litter Pick — Saturday 13th September, 10.00–11.30am

We're also planning a practical, positive step as part of the Climate Café work being pioneered at St Ninian's: a litter-pick in Inverleith Park. Meet at the park entrance in East Fettes Avenue. Gardening gloves are recommended, and bags and some litter-picking tools will be available. Feel free to bring a snack to share afterwards as we enjoy fellowship and fresh air. It's a simple way to care for our environment and connect with one another.

Let's show strong support from Stockbridge Church — your presence makes a difference. Whether you come for the worship, the walk, or the warm conversation, we'd love to see you there!

Ben Bond

ARE YOU FREE ON AN OCCASIONAL MONDAY MORNING?

A small group of volunteers support the Baby and Toddler group on Monday mornings during term times. We put out some toys and activities for little ones and prepare coffee, tea and snacks. An adult is always there with each child, and they particularly appreciate a safe place for the children to play while they get a chance to chat. There are two volunteers each Monday and we would love to have some more people involved. If you are at all interested, can you please contact me or any of the people on duty at Church on a Sunday.

Anne Wallace

annewallace@blueyonder.co.uk, 07720136867

Celebrating Age Project

The Celebrating Age Project (CAP) is a small group of mainly 'slightly older' people who enjoy meeting to celebrate whatever their age. We meet on the first Wednesday of each month (excluding January) at 2pm in the Session Room.

From October to May we try to have a speaker or activity and during June to September we meet for tea, cake and a chat or an occasional outing.

We would love to welcome new members (any age). They would receive a very warm welcome!

Syllabus so far

1st October On Our Own for mainly business (collection of subs etc) and Tea/Cake/Chat

5th November No fireworks but Lilian (one of our members) will host her own Chocolate Bingo.

3rd December Maureen Kelly will talk on 'Did the Victorians invent Christmas'. Plus few early festive eats

Speakers for future dates are in the pipeline.

Violet Hogg , 0131 332 0272 or 07798706144

Craft Group

The Craft Group continues to meet in No. 7, at 7 Raeburn Place on the last Tuesday of the month from 2pm until 4pm.

All crafters are welcome, just bring along your current project and get to know us over a cup of tea or coffee.

Kirk Fellowship Group

The group meets on Zoom on Tuesday evenings from 7pm for about an hour. We have paused our study of the Acts of The Apostles over the summer but will resume in September.

If you are interested in joining us for informal Bible study with a friendly and supportive group please speak to Ben or Chris.

Judith Walker

DOORS OPEN DAYS 2025

On the weekend of 27th and 28th September, we plan to open our church for the **Doors Open Day** weekend. The theme is *Architectural Heritage: Windows to the Past, Doors to the Future*, so lots of possibilities to invite people in and wow our visitors. Speak to any member of the Kirk Session with your ideas.

Every year, this exceptional event opens the doors to hidden treasures, inviting you to explore the architectural wonders that have shaped our past and continue to influence our present. Doors Open Days is not just about bricks and mortar. It is about communities coming together to share their passions, memories, and aspirations.

We are asking for volunteers to help plan this event, and then set it up and be at the church on the open days to welcome visitors.

Please help with this important way of reaching out and inviting people in to join us!

Speak to Ben or any member of the Kirk Session, who will be delighted to hear from you.

Edinburgh Direct Aid international

I was reminded recently in a newsletter of all the work done by Edinburgh Direct Aid. In relation to Gaza and Israel they reported the following:

Tragedy in Gaza and Israel - EDA's response

"In line with EDA's 30-year history of assisting those suffering the effects of war and disaster overseas, we had to respond to the horrific tragedy in Gaza, following the incursion by Hamas into southern Israel, which left more than 1000 dead and 200 taken hostage. Israel's present intention to eliminate Hamas has led to terrible bombardment, catastrophic destruction of hospitals and many other buildings in the Gaza strip and the deaths of

at least 40,000 Gazans, including many children. EDA has collected money to support the work of the Palestine Medical Relief Society, a trusted organisation with whom we have worked in the past, to supply funds for medical aid in the Gaza strip. Next, we joined forces with another trusted charity, Refugee Biryani and Bananas (RBB) to truck food in from Egypt through the Rafah crossing, while that crossing remained open. All crossing points are now blockaded by Israeli forces and our help in Gaza is restricted to getting funds to our medical colleague in Gaza, Dr Khamis Elessi, who continues to work there despite having the opportunity to leave."

At the end of the newsletter there is a section on Community Support. It reads:

Community Support:

"The question is often asked: What difference can a small agency like EDA make in a world of misery that results in so many displaced people. The answer is not much overall. But in the places where we work, quite a lot. EDA's work would not be possible without the generosity of the community here in UK, in donating and in volunteering. EDA's small contribution to the big picture is thanks to this wonderful community effort, of which your donation is a part. Your kindness allows us to carry on being of help to those who need it most."

We have continued to support EDA by giving our building for concerts and in the past, we have also collected goods for them to send to various areas around the world. Their website is at www.edinburghdirectaid.org which will give you more details of their activities and their requests for help.

They need the following:

- CLOTHING FOR MEN AND WOMEN, YOUNG AND OLD, BABIES, CHILDREN, TEENAGERS.
- COATS, FLEECEs, WATERPROOFS -- Weatherproof clothing of all sorts.
- GOOD SHOES AND BOOTS- MOUNTAIN BOOTS-WELLY BOOTS-PADDED BOOTS
- TOILETRIES: SOAP, SHAMPOO, TOOTHPASTE, SANITARY TOWELS, RAZORS
- SCHOOL SUPPLIES: paper, pens, pencils

If you cannot get any items to their warehouse, bring them to Church.

Anne Wallace

VJ Day 80

***When you go home tell them of us and say,
For your tomorrow we gave our today.***

These words are frequently quoted on VE Day - but Victory in Europe in May 1945, was not the end of World War 2. Fierce fighting went on in Burma (now Myanmar) until the August of that year when Japan surrendered. The words are inscribed on the epitaph in Kohima in the North-East of India. Often 'The Burma Campaign' has been neglected or ignored, with the result that those who suffered and sacrificed much as they took part in what was a brutal war have felt they were 'the forgotten army'. As 80 years have passed since the end of World War 2 it was time to have a special commemoration in which they were honoured.

The Edinburgh Inter Faith Association decided to mark their celebration of VJDay 80 with a function in the Gurdwara on Sunday 20th July. The Gurdwara was an appropriate place for this commemoration as there were many Sikhs, who are famous for their bravery and fighting skills, in the British Army and they played a great part in the Burma Campaign - along with many others from South Asia. Our Macular Audio Book Group meets in Stockbridge Library once a month; Wege Singh, of the staff, is in charge, and on Friday 18th July, he told us he was very involved with preparations for the event to commemorate VJDay 80 and invited us to join it. Three of us decided to go.



When we arrived at the Gurdwara we were welcomed by Wege among others and taken to a small room near the door to take off our shoes (putting them in pigeonholes) and adjust our headscarves and wash our hands before being taken to the meeting which was about to begin. Around the stage were large posters with information about people who had been in the army and one with

information about the contribution of women during the wars. The President of the EIFA, who is Jewish, welcomed everyone. Then Ms Ravinder Kaur, who is Chair of Religions for Peace, UK women of Faith Network, described the work of the Network, after which a Muslim lady, of the organisation Colourful Heritage, told us about her recent research into the role of South Asian service men and women in the British Army in the two World Wars, some of whom gained high honours. A plan has now been

finalised for the building of a permanent memorial of their contribution in the grounds of the Kelvingrove Art Gallery in Glasgow.

We were impressed by the number of Sikhs present who were descendants of members of the British Army, especially 3 generations of one family who stood up to be recognised. After the main speakers finished members of the audience who had something special to share were invited to speak. One of these was Cleodie MacKinnon, whom some members of our Church know as she is a regular at the Malawi Coffee Morning and the Music Hub; since her father was in the British Indian Army she was born in India and spent much of her childhood there - and she was actually there when the War ended. She was possibly the only person present who had been in India at the time; she spoke of how her father, who was too old to take part in fighting had trained recruits before they were sent to join the campaign.



Of course we were not allowed to leave without having something to eat! We were taken to have a meal brought to us on trays in the restaurant.

We all felt it had been a privilege to have been so warmly welcomed to share in the commemoration and returned home feeling moved at the sacrifices so many from South Asia had made for our freedom.

Margaret S. MacGregor

A walking trail celebrating some of Edinburgh's best-loved and most historic churches has been launched on by representatives from Scotland's three largest Christian denominations, including the Church of Scotland.

Ten of the city's architectural jewels and spiritual havens feature in the Edinburgh City Centre Historic Churches Walking Trail, which leads from the Royal Mile to the New Town and the West End.



(Outside St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral. Image by Peter Backhouse.)

The trail takes in all three city cathedrals, including: St Giles' Cathedral on the Royal Mile, where Queen Elizabeth II laid at rest; St Mary's Catholic Cathedral on York Place, visited by Pope John Paul

II in 1982; and St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral near Haymarket, the city's highest building.

Smaller churches highlighted include: Canongate Kirk, the parish church to the royal Palace of Holyroodhouse; St Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, which is modelled on Trafalgar Square's St Martin-in-the-Fields; and Old St Paul's, which hosts Alison Watt's iconic painting Still.

The trail is an ecumenical venture involving the Church of Scotland, the Diocese of Edinburgh in the Scottish Episcopal Church, and the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh. It was designed by Anne Martin, a congregant from the Episcopal Diocese.

Rev Dr Scott Rennie, minister of St Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh, said: "Edinburgh has some of Scotland's most uplifting places of worship, and I hope the trail encourages people from far and wide to discover some of them. It is wonderful for our three church communities to be working together."

www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/articles

Inverleith St Serf's Church

1A Clark Road

The Bible and Animal Ethics

Lecture by Dr Suzanna Millar

(Lecturer in Hebrew/Old Testament, University of Edinburgh)

Sunday 21 September
6.30pm



Photo courtesy of SARX

Scottish Charity No: SC015442

2025 AUTUMN LECTURE SERIES



Ecology matters

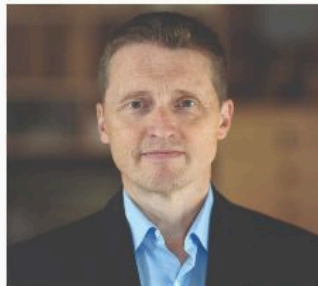
WELLBEING OF CREATION & HUMANITY

📍 **Morningside Parish Church, Cluny Gardens**

🕒 **Sundays 7–8pm** | ☕ **Refreshments from 6:30pm**

📺 **Join in person or livestream:** morningsideparishchurch.org.uk

🎟️ **Free entry – donations welcome at the door**



7 SEPT

Ecology, The Climate and The Need for Action

Dr Mike Robinson OBE

As Chief Executive of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society and Chair of Stop Climate Chaos Scotland, Mike Robinson has been instrumental in informing sustainability and climate change for 25 years.



14 SEPT

The Unstoppable Power of Hope: Christian Aid at 80

Val Brown

Val Brown is Head of Christian Aid in Scotland. She has served on the Church of Scotland's World Mission Council, chaired their Middle East Committee and currently chairs their ethical oversight committee.



21 SEPT

Nature's Genius: Evolution's Lessons for a Changing Planet

Professor David Farrier

David Farrier is Professor of Literature and the Environment at the University of Edinburgh, and author of *Nature's Genius: Evolution's Lessons for a Changing Planet* and *Footprints: In search of Future Fossils*.

Stockbridge Music Hub

After a very busy Fringe, The Music Hub events will be back in the autumn, aiming to provide a place for people to share music – listening, playing and creating.



Thank Music it's Friday will return on September 5th at 1pm, when a singer and pianist will offer a lunchtime concert (more detail to follow, see website). These events happen on the first Friday of each month, programmes last under an hour, and are suitable for all ages. TMIF concerts are free, donations welcome.

There is a flute bonanza with a competition winner on the September 13th.

Clea Friend

Malawi Coffee Morning meets at 10.30 – 12 midday on the first Friday of the month. All welcome!

Your contributions for The Bridge are very welcome

Just email bridge@stockbridgechurch.org.uk, or leave in Bridge pigeonhole, or speak to Shona Cameron in church.

All contributions for the next issue should be e-mailed to Shona at above email address. If you do not have access to email, please phone her.

The deadline for the next Bridge, the winter edition and last one before Christmas, is **Sunday 16th November, 2025**

About the future of the Bridge, have you an interest in sharing the church news with the congregation, and reaching out to our communities? We are looking for volunteers to join in the editorial team to contribute to a brighter and wider ranging content and presentation. Speak to Shona, or use the contact details listed on page 2. Your church needs you!

Our worship continues online, as well as in person, on Sunday at 11am. Watch live, or on demand, by visiting our website, Facebook, or YouTube channel (Stockbridge Parish Church).

Come and join us!

You will be very welcome

Stockbridge Church

STOCKBRIDGE PARISH CHURCH

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0131 332 0122

www.stockbridgechurch.org.uk



Stockbridge Parish Church of Scotland, Edinburgh
Registered Scottish Charity, Charity No – SC002499

Enquiries about use of the church and halls are welcome, contact the church office, or see our website.